Mobile service in Gujarat

4971. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of dist·icts in Gujarat where mobile service is available at present;

(b) the number of districts in the State where this service has not yet been launched; and

(c) by when this service would be provided in the remaining districts of the State during the current year ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) The following companies are licensed to provide and have commissioned Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) in Gujarat Telecom Circle Service Area.

1. M/s. Fascel Ltd.
2. M/s. IDEA Cellular Ltd.
3. M/s. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited
4. M/s. Bharti Cellular Ltd.

As per the information provided by these companies, CMTS is available in the district headquarters of 24 Districts out of total 25 Districts in Gujarat Telecom Circle Service Area.

(c) As per the terms and conditions of the licence for CMTS, in the Telecom Circle Service Areas, an operator is required to cover 10% of the District Headquarters within one year and 50% of the District Headquarters within three years. The Licensee is also ;ermitted to cover any other town in a district in lieu of the District Headquarter. The choice of District Headquarters/Towns to be covered and further expansion beyond 50% District Headquarters/Towns shall lie with the Licensee depending on his business decision. There is no mandatory requirement for coverage of 100% of the districts.

However, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has plans to cover the remaining Districts in Gurajat Telecom Circle Service Area by June, 2003.

MTNL and BSNL cellular telephones

4972. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether people are showing less interest on Government owned MTNL

and BSNL cellular telephones as compared to the private sector cellular telephones players;

(b) whether Government have conducted any study to ascertain the reasons therefor; and

(c) the efforts made by Government to make its cellular services more demanding and friendly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Sir, people are showing keen interest in Cellular telephone services of MTNL and BSNL.

(c) MTNL has taken following measures to make its Cellular services more demanding and friendly:—

(i) An affordable tariff, which is better than other cellular operators in Delhi and Mumbai.

(ii) Additional franchisees have been appointed in National Capital Region (NCR) towns and customer care centres have been opened to facilitate customers in NCR towns.

(iii) Expansion of existing mobile network has been taken to increase capacity and also to improve RF coverage.

(iv) Additional value Added services like Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) services, roaming to pre-paid customers in selected network etc. have been planned.

Similarly BSNL has also taken following measures in this direction :

(i) Offering of various competitive tariff plans for facilitating affordability of BSNL's cellular services.

(ii) Establishment of distribution channels in addition to BSNL's own Customer Service Centres for easy accessibility to services for the consumers.

(iii) Nationwise coverage including important National Highways and Railways routes of the country.

(iv) Offering of nationwide roaming facility to post paid and zonal roaming to prepaid category customers.

(v) Establishment of Call Centres to address Consumer grievances regarding mobile services.

(vi) Continuous monitoring of the network performance for providing good quality service and thereby customer satisfaction.